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A FINANCIAL SYSTEM FOR THE GENERAL CHARITIES OF THE CHURCH.

DR. TWING'S REPLY TO BISHOP HUNTINGTON'S OPEN LETTER.—(See page 4.)

MY DEAR BISHOP : I can hardly command words to express the interest awakened in my mind and heart by the reading, or, I might rather say, by the study of your letter. I believe God moved you to write it, and so I thank Him. Your own will and energies readily yielded to the Divine influence, and so I thank you. It seems to me that our whole Church should heartily thank God and thank you for that letter. It will live and work for good in widening circles when you and I have fallen asleep.

Within the past thirteen years of my connection with the work of Domestic Missions, I have given considerable thought to what, for the lack of a better title, if one can be found, I venture to call *A Financial System for the General Charities of the Church*. The subject has been frequently discussed, as you are aware, in our Board of Missions, but without reaching a solution of the great and important problem.

Even now, as I write, I seem to see Bishop Armitage standing in his place, and to hear his pleasant and persuasive tones while pleading with the deepest earnestness for such a System. "He being dead, yet speaketh." You and I can both recall others, able and good men, who have manifested a deep and lively interest in this subject. Indeed, the matter has been thought of sufficient importance to be referred to Special Committees for consideration and report, and yet, so far, no practical result has been attained.

Now, my dear Bishop, your letter has so stirred me—I may almost say has so set me on fire—that I am emboldened to outline to you, and through you to the Church, a plan which my personal thinking and the suggestions of others, and notably your recent letter, have served to form in my own mind.

For the purpose of the present calculation, I adhere to the number of possible helpers given in my letter to Mr. Clark—280,000 communicants, and the same number of non-communicants, including children ; making a total of 560,000 persons to whom we might look for sympathy, interest and aid in the work and growth of the Church. This number

does not probably comprise more than about one-half of the nominal Churchmen in this land, but I think it does comprise as many as are likely to be reached and favorably influenced.

An *average* of five cents a week from each of these 560,000 persons gives an aggregate, as I stated in my former letter, of \$1,456,000 per annum.

Now let us see what could be done with this amount of money. It would give for—

Domestic Missions.....	\$300,000	per annum.
Foreign Missions.....	300,000	“
Home Missions to Colored People.....	100,000	“
Indian Missions.....	100,000	“
Education of Young Men for the Ministry.....	100,000	“
Aged and Infirm Clergy, and Widows and Orphans of Deceased Clergymen.....	36,000	“
Work among the Jews.....	10,000	“
Work among the Germans and Scandinavians.....	10,000	“
Work in Mexico.....	20,000	“
Bible and Prayer Book Society.....	20,000	“
Church Publications.....	20,000	“
An <i>average</i> of \$10,000, for Diocesan Missions, to each of our 44 Dioceses.....	440,000	“
Total.....	\$1,456,000	“
The expense of working the plan being charged <i>pro rata</i> to the several Branches named.		

Thus are embraced all the leading, organized General Charities of the Church to which you allude in your letter ; and thus, on paper, are they all more generously provided for than they have been, or are ever likely to be, under our present methods of supply.

With the Mission work in Dioceses thus cared for, the whole of the \$300,000 named for Domestic Missions could be used in the ten existing Missionary Jurisdictions, giving an *average* of \$30,000 to each, which would be sufficient, not only for the support of the Missionary Bishop and other Missionaries, but also, with what the people themselves could give, for all purposes of Church building and the establishment and conducting of schools.

No Missionary or Diocesan Bishop would any longer be under the disagreeable necessity of leaving his field to plead in person for money, or to appeal for it through the Church papers, or directly, by letter, to Rectors or members of parishes.

And as all Diocesan Mission work would be met by an *average* of \$10,000 for each Diocese, no Presbyter or Deacon would any longer feel

himself called upon to take in hand the sorry task of perambulating the streets of our larger cities in quest of aid in the matter of Church building.

What a wide-spreading relief ! It would come not only to the large class of Bishops and other Clergy who have long borne the unenviable title of *Clerical Beggars*, but also to a very much larger class, embracing the best, most generous and most conscientious laymen in the land, who, having the mind and heart to help, have been bewildered and distressed by the various and unceasing calls upon them, and are in danger of being hardened by the necessity of often turning a deaf ear to applications which they have not the time duly to consider.

The plan under consideration would seem almost worthy the attempt to realize it, were it only to save the manners and the reputation of good Christian people.

A sense of unspeakable relief would also come to the whole Church in the supersedure of an immense amount of complicated and annoying machinery, by one simple and uniform method. This method, let it be stated, would leave parishes little else to do, except to take care of themselves, and provide for local work, such as parochial and city Missions, and institutions like hospitals and homes in their immediate neighborhood.

Regarding the manner of carrying the system into effect, I do not deem it needful to say much at this stage of the discussion. All this can be duly considered when practical details shall be more properly in order ; but I have also some thoughts on this branch of the subject which I may venture to present at some future time.

Of course, to get the plan fairly before the mind of our whole Church, to secure its general adoption, and to test it by its actual working, would require time and patience and perseverance in their most wisely and divinely ordered uses. Prepossessions and prejudices would have to be overcome in some quarters, and almost stolid indifference in others. No matter for all that. The thing proposed is worth a thousand times more than it can cost ; and will answer, if it can be attained, as I fully believe it can, not only for one generation, but for all time through which the offices and energies of loving and loyal discipleship shall be called for.

You may remember that, in my former letter, my suggestions were limited to our Domestic Missions, as they are generally understood ; but your letter has led me on to broader and grander conceptions of what might be done within the entire sphere of our Christian and Churchly responsibilities.

With this plan in full operation, from Trinity Parish, New York, to the weakest Mission in Utah or Washington Territory, Missionary Bishops and Diocesan Bishops and Missionaries of all grades, from any portion of the vast Home or Foreign field, when visiting the great centres of our population in this part of the world, would undoubtedly be welcomed in all the churches, to inform the faithful of the needs which their own eyes have seen and of the hindrances and obstacles overcome by the help of God ; and, by holy discourse on the blessedness of living and toiling, and of dying, if need be, for the ongoing of the Kingdom, to intensify the fervor and enlarge the range of the Missionary spirit. Would it not, my dear Bishop, be a blessed thing, not only at the centres of our population, but everywhere, to be thus able to speak for principles, with no thought of money in return, except such as should come in the regular and general way?

Of course what I have here written derives its pertinency and force, if either can be predicated of it, from the thought that the plan suggested be preceded by the unification, under one Executive body, of all our organized General Charities. Indeed, this thought has already rooted itself very firmly in many of the best minds of our Communion, and must be central in any scheme that will secure their unqualified acceptance and support.

You very significantly ask, "Has the Church, in her corporate character, nothing to do about it?" and, for one, I take it upon myself, not presumptuously I hope, to answer most emphatically, *Yes*, much, very much to do about it, if the light and life she has received from God are to accomplish that for which they were given ; and I would beg you, my dear Bishop, by way of helping to prepare for the proper corporate action, to do all in your power, by letter and by word of mouth, so to awaken and inform the Church mind upon the vital importance of this whole subject, that the next General Convention shall not meet and adjourn without stamping the impress of its authority upon, and energizing with its moral power, the scheme here outlined, or some other which shall be deemed better fitted to accomplish the end proposed.

I am, my dear Bishop,

Very gratefully and affectionately yours,

A. T. TWING,

Secretary and General Agent.